

Remarks

Claims 1-18, 20-25 and 30-50 were pending in the present application, of which claims 7-18, 20-25 and 23-50 have been withdrawn from consideration as being directed to non-elected species. New claims 51-62 have been added. It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims define allowable subject matter.

As a preliminary matter, it is noted that the outstanding Office Action indicates that claims 1-18 and 20-50 are pending. However, in a Preliminary Amendment mailed December 18, 2003, claims 19 and 26-29 were canceled. Therefore, it is believed that claims 1-18, 20-25 and 30-50 were pending prior to the present Amendment.

The drawings have been objected to as lacking functional labels in the blocks. Replacement drawing sheets are being submitted herewith that add labels to the blocks that are believed to warrant such labeling. The labels correspond to the description of each block in the detailed description. No new subject matter has been added.

The specification has been amended above to correct reference numeral inconsistencies and other minor errors. No new subject matter has been added.

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Thompson (USP 5990981). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for reasons set forth hereafter.

Independent claims 1, 5 and 6 recite, among other things, an array of individual video signal connector contacts arranged in connector rows along an x-axis and connector columns along a y-axis. First and second connectors are also recited, along with a signal processing unit.

Thompson fails to teach or suggest the claimed combination. As illustrated in Figures 3 and 5 of Thompson, Thompson describes an output module board 44, a rear input connection board 54 and a midplane structure 52, none of which include an array of individual video signal connector contacts arranged in connector rows along an x-axis and connector columns along a y-axis.

In the outstanding Office Action, item 30' of Thompson is cited as allegedly meeting the claimed array of individual video signal connector contacts arranged in connector rows along an

x-axis and connector columns along a y-axis. The undersigned strongly disagrees. Item 30' constitutes a "color coded bead" and is described by Thompson as follows at Column 5, lines 35-41:

Continuing to refer to FIG. 3, each of the rear boards shown therein has a color coding plastic bead 30' mounted at an upward portion of the outer face of the respective rear board. As will be seen, the color of each bead 30' is the same as the color of the color coding bead 30 of the corresponding front board with which the rear board is aligned.

The "blue" beads match the color coded beads 30 of the switching module boards 32, while the "red" beads match the bead 30 of the power supply board 34 (Column 5, lines 49-52 and 61-64). The color coded beads of Thompson do not teach or suggest the claimed array of individual video signal connector contacts arranged in connector rows along an x-axis and connector columns along a y-axis. Nor does Thompson include any other structure that resembles the claimed array of video signal connector contacts.

Further, Thompson lacks the claimed first and second connectors. Thus, Thompson does not teach or suggest the claimed inventions.

Moreover, dependent claims 2-4 and new claims 51- 62 are also patentable over Thompson. Claim 2 requires that at least some portion of each of the conductors is aligned with the first and second connectors. Claims 3 and 4 define the signal processing unit to be aligned with the first and second connectors. Thompson lacks any such structure.

New claim 51 defines a video signal connection apparatus to include a substrate arranged in a plane having an x-axis and a y-axis. Video signal connector contacts are supported by the substrate and are arranged in two-dimensional matrix having contact rows extending along the x-axis and contact columns extending along the y-axis. Each video signal connector contact projects from the substrate in a connection direction that differs from the x-axis and that differs from the y-axis. A first signal processing unit (SPU) connector is located proximate an edge of the substrate and is configured to engage a mating SPU connector. As explained above, Thompson lacks the claimed configuration of video signal connector contacts, as well as the SPU connector.

Claims 52-62 define additional features of the apparatus that are not taught or suggested by the prior art.

The unapplied, cited references fail to make up for the deficiencies of Thompson.

In view of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the prior art fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention. Should anything remain in order to place the present application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully Submitted,

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